

BUILDING INSPECTIONS

DESCRIPTION

Building Inspections' primary function is to enforce provisions of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VaUSBC), which regulates new building construction as mandated by the State of Virginia. In compliance with the code, the department accepts permit applications, reviews those applications for compliance with the VaUSBC, and issues permits for the proposed work. The department also reviews proposed plans and the actual construction for compliance with federal and state construction mandates. Plans are also distributed to other county departments for review, if required.

Inspectors perform site visits to inspect construction projects at various stages of completion. Field verification is needed to ensure that construction proceeds in compliance with approved plans and applicable practices, and to ensure that work by all trades (structural, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, gas, and fire prevention) is installed in compliance with the applicable code requirements. After successful completion of construction, the department issues a certificate of occupancy before the building is put to its intended use.

FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

	FY2001 Actual	FY2002 Adopted	FY2003 Adopted	FY2004 Planned	Change FY2002 to FY2003	Change FY2003 to FY2004	FY2005 Projected	FY2006 Projected
Personnel	\$2,880,581	\$2,986,900	\$3,164,500	\$3,164,500	5.9%	0.0%	\$3,164,500	\$3,164,500
Operating	483,049	498,700	472,500	472,500	-5.3%	0.0%	472,500	472,500
Capital	<u>221,281</u> *	<u>215,000</u>	<u>223,700</u>	<u>223,700</u>	4.0%	0.0%	<u>223,700</u>	<u>223,700</u>
Total	\$3,584,911	\$3,700,600	\$3,860,700	\$3,860,700	4.3%	0.0%	\$3,860,700	\$3,860,700
Revenue**	<u>3,596,907</u>	<u>3,605,000</u>	<u>3,710,000</u>	<u>3,782,800</u>	2.9%	2.0%	<u>3,857,200</u>	<u>3,933,300</u>
Net Cost	(\$11,996)	\$95,600	\$150,700	\$77,900	57.6%	-48.3%	\$3,500	(\$72,600)
FT Pos.	63	63	63	63	0	0	63	63

* Includes \$205,000 reserve for technology improvements not reflected in sectional summary.

** Building Inspections revenues also partially fund the Fire and EMS Department's Plans Review Section. The net cost of the Plans Review Section was \$416,000 and \$540,000 in FY2001 and FY2002, respectively. Building Inspection revenues will continue to partially fund Plans Review in the out years.

BUDGET ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

The Building Inspections Department has experienced erratic shifts in revenue and workload over the past few years. Building permit revenues did not meet the adopted budget for FY2001. In recognition of this reduction in activity, the department reduced expenditures to compensate.

The 2002 adopted budget for building permit revenue reflected the assumption that building activity for that period would decrease due to economic conditions. Circumstances subsequent to that estimate have proven just the opposite, that low mortgage rates and land available for construction

have led to significant increases in building permit activity. While this increase will likely lead to revenues over the adopted budget in FY2002, it has already created heavy workloads for department staff. The department is currently examining ways to maintain existing service levels while addressing workload issues.

Building Inspections' budget for FY2003 includes modest increases in personnel and capital costs. Capital included in the FY2003 budget (and in future years) is almost entirely for hardware and software purchases related to the new Chesterfield

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Development Information System (CDIS). An increase in permit revenue and a corresponding increase in part-time salaries also address the additional workload issues. During the FY2003 budget process, departments were directed to develop and submit budget requests which included potential spending reduction plans. Despite the increase in activity, the FY2003 budget for building inspections reflects an approximate 1.5% reduction in expenditures (excluding merit increase and CDIS capital costs) in conformity with the budget reductions in other county departments.

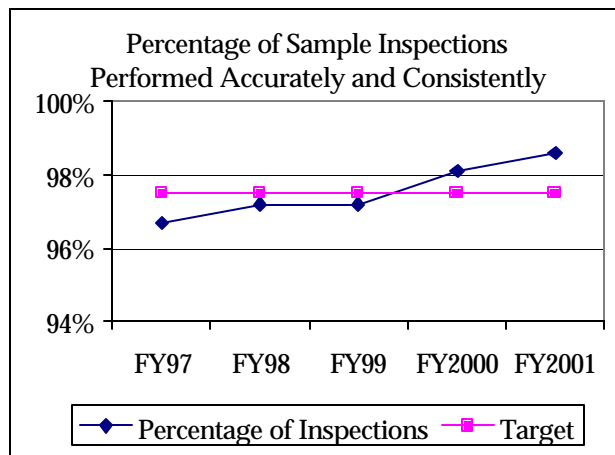
Several initiatives are currently underway in Building Inspections. The Chesterfield Development Information System (CDIS) is a central relational database that will link all community development related functions together through the use of one software system. The implementation of CDIS will allow inspectors to have complete

information in the field and eliminate the need for administrative staff to key information into a separate system. CDIS will also result in more efficient customer service and lead to the ability to transact business over the Internet.

Building Inspections is working on several other new initiatives. Currently, inspectors in the department are being cross-trained to perform multiple types of inspections. These combination inspectors will be organized into regional teams in an effort to reduce travel time and increase efficiency. Imaging is another opportunity for the department to increase efficiency through electronic scanning and storage of documents. The Building Inspections Department received an 86.1% satisfaction rate on a customer satisfaction survey conducted in August 2001.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

- Goal:** To make Chesterfield the safest and most secure community in the United States. Supports Countywide Strategic Goal Number 7.
- Objective:** To perform accurate and consistent inspections in accordance with the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code
- Measure:** Percentage of sampled inspections performed accurately and consistently



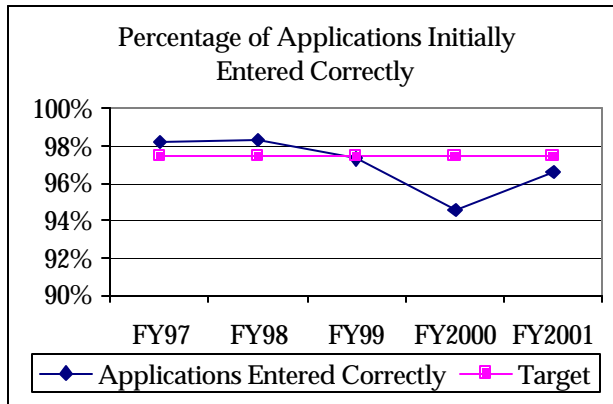
Initiatives

- Cross training of inspectors
- Continuous mentoring and outside training
- Inspector Certification Program
- Feedback of quality control results to inspectors

Note: Four percent of inspections are monitored for accuracy and consistency

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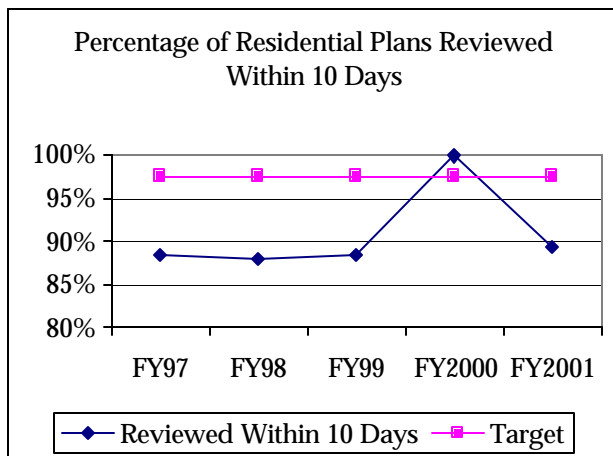
Goal: To provide world class customer service. Supports Countywide Strategic Goal Number 2.
Objective: Improve accuracy and timeliness of permit application processing
Measure: Percentage of applications initially entered correctly



Initiatives

- Quality assurance reviews and supplemental training
- Administrative cross-training program
- Job share program
- Chesterfield Development Information System (currently in development)

Goal: To foster a positive relationship between the department and the business community. Supports Countywide Strategic Goal Number 7.
Objective: Provide timely review of residential building permit applications
Measure: Percentage of residential plans reviewed within 10 days (Initial plan review turnaround time for residential structural plans reviewed by Building Inspection only)

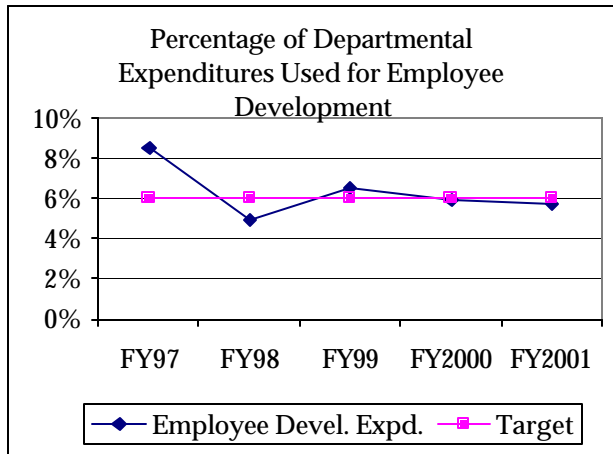


Initiatives

- Front counter customer assistance with residential plan reviews
- Master Plan Program
- Maintain staffing

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Goal: To be the employer of choice. Supports Countywide Strategic Goal Number 6.
Objective: Maintain a commitment to employee training, education, development, rewards, and recognition
Measure: Expenditures for employee development as a percentage of personnel costs



Initiatives

- Rewards and recognition programs
- Local and national conference attendance
- Cross-training
- School of Quality and Continuous Improvement (TQI University)
- Customer service, technical, and computer training

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

With the installation of CDIS in 2002-2003, Building Inspections will concentrate on eliminating rework caused by the current mainframe system. The central relational database will help Building Inspections expand customer service and improve its reporting ability for better statistical data collection.

As part of the CDIS capital project, the department plans to purchase laptop computer field units. These units will allow inspectors to have complete information about a project while in the field. Units can download and upload field information, reducing the requirement for manual entry of field comments by support staff. CDIS improvements are planned to include imaging of associated paperwork, applications, residential plat plans and smaller plans.

A new program has been instituted that provides commercial plan review comments over the Internet. This program will soon be expanded to include residential plans review information. In the future the department hopes to expand this program to include accepting applications and payments via the Internet.

Imaging may be the next opportunity to improve customer service by reducing wait time, ensuring correct information is available to all reviewers and customers, and restructuring services for greater cost efficiency. Imaging eliminates the need for multiple paper copies of plans and other documents related to a permit by creating an easily stored permanent copy of pertinent information.

The department is also looking toward a major relocation with the construction and completion of the community development building. The new building will house several community development departments together in the same location. This will be much more efficient as Building Inspections' staff interact with many other community development departments on a daily basis. The new building is scheduled to be completed in fall, 2005.

Building Inspections will continue these and other programs into the future as part of the department's emphasis on constant improvement in customer service.

Increases in future year projections, if any, reflect the operating impact of the opening of new facilities.